

## ***2005-2006 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

### *U.S. Department of Education*

**Cover Sheet** Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☒ Elementary ☐ Middle ☐ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Charter

Name of Principal Mrs. Marcia A. Harrison  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Fairview Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 700 Walker Rd

Dover Delaware 19904-3497  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)  
County Kent State School Code Number\* 130638

Telephone (302) 672-1645 Fax (302) 672-1654

Website/URL www.k12.de.us/Fairview E-mail mharrison@capital.k12.de.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Michael D. Thomas  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Capital School District Tel. (302) 672-1556

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Michael Adams  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

**[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]**

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2005-2006 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- |           |                     |
|-----------|---------------------|
| <u>7</u>  | Elementary schools  |
| <u>1</u>  | Middle schools      |
| <u>1</u>  | Junior high schools |
| <u>1</u>  | High schools        |
| <u>2</u>  | Other               |
| <u>12</u> | TOTAL               |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$8,925

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,998

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☒ Urban or large central city  
☐ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area  
☐ Suburban  
☐ Small city or town in a rural area  
☐ Rural

4. 4 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

           If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	4	3	7	7			
K	32	28	60	8			
1	40	37	77	9			
2	31	35	66	10			
3	21	19	40	11			
4	29	25	54	12			
5				Other			
6							
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							304

*[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]*

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- |             |                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>43%</u>  | % White                          |
| <u>50%</u>  | % Black or African American      |
| <u>5%</u>   | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| <u>1%</u>   | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| <u>1%</u>   | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100%</b> | <b>Total</b>                     |

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 17%

[This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.]

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	25
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	27
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	52
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	304
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.17
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1 %  
3 Total Number Limited English Proficient  
 Number of languages represented: 2  
 Specify languages: Spanish, French Creole

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 44%

Total number students who qualify: 133

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services:  $\frac{19\%}{57}$  Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>    </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>    </u> Deafness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>    </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>30</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>    </u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>19</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>    </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>    </u> Mental Retardation	<u>    </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>    </u> Multiple Disabilities	

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

**Number of Staff**

	<u><b>Full-time</b></u>	<u><b>Part-Time</b></u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>    </u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>    </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>32</u>	<u>3</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 15:1
13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	93%	94%	95%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	96%	95%	96%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	<1%	<1%	<2%	<1%	<1%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	%	%	%	%	%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	%	%	%	%	%

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Fairview Elementary School is located in historic Dover, Delaware, our state's capital. The school serves approximately 304 students from the downtown Dover area and is one of seven elementary schools in the Capital School District. Fairview's diverse population includes 50% African American students, 43% White, 5% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. Nineteen percent of the students at Fairview Elementary are identified as special needs. Forty-four percent of our students qualify as low income, and the school also provides income-based pre-school services (Delaware Early Choices Pre-School Program). The school's small size and culturally rich student and staff population enhance the educational and socio-emotional growth of our children and affords us the opportunity to personalize the learning experience for all.

As a school-wide Title I program, Fairview Elementary is committed to meeting the needs of its diverse population. The mission of Fairview Elementary School is to offer the best educational program possible in order to develop the mind and character of each child. To accomplish this goal we must foster academic excellence, encourage artistic expression, nurture creativity, explore technology, celebrate diversity, and enhance confidence in self. We have established high expectations for all children and communicate these expectations daily in our work with students. We provide an environment that celebrates and promotes understanding of self and others and expect that everyone will behave in a manner that represents the standards we have set for our school community. We have established close working relationships with our parents and the community and depend on their support to help us meet our goals.

A Reading First school, Fairview Elementary is committed to a vision that every child will become a proficient reader. It is this fundamental belief that provides a catalyst for forming and maintaining a collaborative effort towards reaching this goal. The incredible growth of all children in reading over the past five years is evident in the decreases in the achievement gaps between all subgroups of children served in the school. Not only are we meeting yearly targets for all subgroups set by the state and our district, we are also moving more children into the higher achievement levels. The growth our children have made is a direct result of our staff's use of data to make instructional decisions and their willingness to reflect on instructional practices that will impact student learning. Through monitoring student progress on a regular basis and collaboration with teachers, interventions are outlined, implemented, and adjusted to provide exemplary instructional services for each and every child. Alignment and coordination of instructional resources such as the Pre School program, Full Day Kindergarten programs, Title I, Special Education, and intensive reading interventions guarantee that children meet with success at the earliest levels. In cooperation with Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Fairview matches community volunteers as mentors for students. Mentors serve as positive role models and visit on a weekly basis.

Fairview Elementary School can best be described as a "professional learning community", with a common vision of raising achievement for all students. Collaborative decision-making and the participation of staff, parents, and community in this process are what sets Fairview apart. The dedication and commitment of the staff at Fairview Elementary is extraordinary. Staff member participate in numerous professional Book Clubs, designed to identify research based practices that directly impact student achievement. Students are encouraged to set their own goals, monitor their progress towards meeting these goals, and celebrate their accomplishments. The Fairview Parent Resource Center, developed with the University of Delaware AmeriCorps VISTA program provides books, games, videos, flash cards, and other learning materials for members of the Fairview learning community. Over 1,000 items are available for parents and staff to check out for use in the classroom or at home. Fairview Elementary School continues to strive to build a community of literacy, one that builds collaborative relationships and supports diverse learners.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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1. The Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) Adequate Yearly Progress accountability system is utilized to determine each school's rating. The rating is based on the performance of students taught in the school. A student's DSTP test results are assigned to the school that the student attends. Student categories that are measured include all students, race/ethnicity, low income, limited English proficient, and students with disabilities. All subgroups must meet annual percentages each year or show a decrease of at least 10% in the number of students not meeting the standards in order for a school to successfully meet Adequate Yearly Progress or AYP requirements. Schools must also meet State Progress Targets consisting of scaled composite scores representing the percentage of students in each of five performance levels for reading, math, science, and social studies tests. A school will receive an overall rating determined by a combination of AYP and State Progress ratings. There must be at least 40 students in any category before that category is utilized in measuring a school's progress towards meeting target goals. Data is reported if there are at least 15 students in a subgroup. Ninety-five percent of all students must participate in the DSTP assessments in order for a school to make adequate yearly progress. The school must also maintain progress from the previous year for other academic indicators. At the elementary level, the cell that is used is the "all" students cell for average scale scores for reading and math combined for students scoring below the standard compared to the previous year (*source: Delaware School Accountability System, web site: <http://www.doe.state.de.us>*). The state targets for Adequate Yearly Progress for the 2003-2004 school year were 63% in reading and 41% in mathematics. The state required participation rate was 95%.

### Reading Assessment Results

An analysis of Fairview Elementary School's 2004-2005 DSTP reading data indicates that all subgroups exceed goals in reading as measured on the DSTP reading assessment. Reading scores show that (95%) of students in Grade 3 Meet or Exceed the state standards. 100% percent of African American students Meet or Exceed the standard. Eighty-five percent of white students met or exceeded the standard while 100% of Low Income students Meet or Exceed the standard. This data indicates that Fairview students are making significant gains at all levels and that there are more students meeting or exceeding the standard as measured by the DSTP each assessment cycle. There is also evidence that the achievement gap is closing. African American students made a 14% gain during this assessment cycle. Special education students showed a 10% gain (although this score was not reported as there were fewer than 40 students in the category). Low income students demonstrated a 13% gain.

Data received through the DSTP is utilized to identify student needs. Needs are identified and plans are developed to address specific needs through our Student Achievement Review Process (SARP). Our school improvement plan contains activities designed to meet the specific needs of students. Individual goals (Individual Improvement Plans or IIPs) for each student not meeting the standards are designed with interventions to meet each student's needs. Literacy Support Teams meet to discuss identified needs and to select interventions that will target instruction that is both diagnostic and prescriptive. The Literacy Support Team determines what intervention will be implemented, for how long, and by whom. Intervention services are delivered by the classroom teacher, the reading specialist, paraprofessionals, extra time programs, and through special education.

## **Mathematics Assessment Data**

Mathematics performance overall for the last assessment cycle showed significant improvement with Fairview Elementary School scores showing an increase of 9% gain over last year's scores. Fairview students scored higher than district and state averages on the assessment (86% met or exceeded state standards). African American students demonstrated an 11% gain with 79% meeting or exceeding standards. Eighty-six percent of low income students met or exceeded the standards and made gains of 14% over last year. All subgroups met or exceeded Adequate Yearly Progress target goals. While gaps in achievement remain between subgroups, scores in the area of mathematics are above average for all students and there are indications that achievement gaps are closing.

The district adopted mathematics program (*Trailblazers*) has been highly successful in meeting student needs. It is research based and is focused on problem solving and higher order thinking skills. Teachers are participating in ongoing professional development focused on the *Trailblazers* program and are utilizing what they learn to improve instruction.

## **Using Assessment Results**

2. A comprehensive system of assessment serves as the nerve center within a successful school. Assessments monitor progress, sense difficulty, and report on the regular health of a school. For a prevention-oriented, school-based system of assessment to be comprehensive and effective it must reliably serve several functions:
  - It must measure growth in each content area.
  - It must reliably screen all students and provide data for levels of interventions.
  - It must reliably predict progress towards meeting essential knowledge and skills.
  - It must accurately monitor progress.
  - It must hold all stakeholders accountable.
  - It must be efficient and economical to administer with minimal disruptions of instructional time.

Fairview Elementary utilizes a comprehensive system of assessment that incorporates screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and accountability measures to review student progress on a regular basis. This system is called the Student Achievement Review Process (SARP). A grade level Assessment Matrix outlines when assessments are delivered in each content area. Reading Assessments (DIBELS and PALS) are given to students using Tungsten T-5 Palm Pilots. Reporting systems through M-Class enable teachers to have immediate access to assessment results. Each teacher has a Data Notebook with current benchmark and progress monitoring information. Experience shows that getting a report and using a report are vastly different. So, teachers meet in grade level teams to review the data and identify students that need additional interventions. During these meetings, discussion and collaboration enable teachers to identify ways to improve student learning. Through sharing of strategies and instructional practices teachers learn new ways to meet student needs. All students not meeting the standard must be matched to an intervention and teachers complete an Action Plan or Classroom Profile that identifies what changes will occur as a result of the data review and discussions. All decisions about instruction are based on student achievement data. The Action Plans and Student Achievement Review Process (SARP) forms are submitted to the building administrator to monitor student, classroom, and grade level progress towards essential skills and knowledge. The building administrator meets with individual teachers to discuss student progress and determine whether more instructional support is needed from content specialists. In addition, the Student Achievement Review Process (SARP) and other student achievement data guide all professional



development so teachers can broaden their knowledge of skills and strategies that will directly impact identified needs.

### **Communicating Student Performance**

3. The goal of an assessment system is to provide a steady stream of data to all stakeholders. Assessments are also a system of communication. They inform administrators, teachers, parents and students about progress. For administrators, the overall health and upward growth of the program is key. For teachers, parents, and students, specific data on individual progress is key. Teachers need to know the strengths and weaknesses of their students. Parents need to know if their children are making progress and how they are doing compared to the rest of the class. Students need to know about their progress and if they are struggling what they can do to improve. For accountability purposes, the results of the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) are mailed to each home. In addition, teachers review student progress and test scores on the DSTP at Fall Parent Teacher Conferences and Individual Instructional Plans (IIP's) are developed with parents for all students not meeting the standard. The IIP outlines the programs and strategies that will be utilized by the teacher over the course of the school year to help the student meet grade level benchmarks. During the Open House in September, the building principal communicates the results from the DSTP and outlines instructional goals and priorities for the current school year.

This information is also included in school newsletters and progress towards these instructional priorities and goals are discussed on a monthly basis. Fairview Elementary also develops a School Plan in collaboration with the Fairview Advisory Council. This council includes teachers, support staff, and parents. Student achievement data is reviewed and achievement goals and activities are developed based on identified needs. It is important to make the progress of students a "public document." Student progress needs to be shared within and across grade level teams. Open discussion encourages problem solving and accountability.

Students, too, need to know how they are doing. This is especially true of those who struggle to read. Knowing that they are becoming better readers stimulates motivation and interest and develops efficacy. Including students in parent conferences and having teachers meet with individual students to review accomplishments are ways to foster student responsibility for learning. Report cards and progress reports present concrete information on current reading levels and skills mastery. The report card includes a rubric that is aligned to essential skills and knowledge and more specifically defines benchmark goals in each content area. Annually, all school districts in Delaware are required to develop district and school level profiles as a report to the community about the district's and schools' progress. School accountability data, general information about schools and their staff and programs are highlighted. General information about the school and program offerings is also included. Copies of profiles are sent home with each child in the fall. Copies of all profiles are also available to the public and may be accessed through the Department of Education's Web Site for School Profiles.

### **Sharing Success**

4. One of the advantages of living in a small state is that teachers have many opportunities to work with their colleagues in other districts and with consultants from the Department of Education and local colleges and universities. Fairview Elementary teachers participate in required district and school level curriculum meetings to discuss best practices and to share effective strategies with their colleagues. Fairview's Advisory Council participates in district-wide school planning

activities annually as schools begin to establish goals and develop school improvement plans for the following year. A part of the district-wide meeting involves schools sharing their successes and plans for the following year. Fairview faculty also participate in after school math clubs, monthly Reading Support Teachers meetings, Literacy Coaches meetings at the county and state levels, and often taking a leadership role by serving as Lead Teachers in math and science. Fairview staff volunteers to serve on district level curriculum committees, and on the Instructional Advisory Council. Both of these activities provide opportunities to highlight successful practices and programs.

At both the district and state level, Fairview Elementary School is viewed as a Reading First “model school”. Teachers from around state visit the classrooms at Fairview to see the implementation of scientifically based reading practices in action. The teachers at Fairview are always willing to share their ideas and personal experiences with Reading First and how their instruction has changed as a result of this initiative.

A group of teachers from Fairview have also presented at state and local conferences regarding Reading First and *Data Driven Instruction*. In May of 2005, teachers at Fairview were selected to present at the International Reading Conference in San Antonio, Texas. The teachers enthusiastically shared their successes with a group of approximately 250 teachers from around the world.

## **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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1. Learning communities are built with a vision of how teachers can support the achievement of each student through an articulated, seamless curriculum. Fairview Elementary aligns curriculum in all content areas to district level initiatives and to state performance standards and utilizes grade level meetings and discussions to review and update how students are engaged with significant content based on high standards. In each content area, a template is used to develop the curriculum. Grade level benchmarks are broken down into specific skills and subsets of skills and essential knowledge at marking period intervals. These skills are taught in coordinated instructional sequences; they include an instructional pacing chart or timeline, and also incorporate explicit instructional strategies. Skills are aligned to assessments and are measured on a quarterly basis using progress monitoring assessments. Curriculum in all content areas includes the content that will be taught, the essential questions, skills/benchmarks, assessments, and activities/strategies. A curriculum is not a lockstep process. Teachers must be mindful of the progress of each student, knowing when to slow or accelerate the pace of instruction.

### **Reading/ELA**

The core curriculum in reading and writing at Fairview Elementary is aligned with state and national standards and addresses instructional priorities at each grade level. The curriculum supports the five components identified by the National Reading Panel Report. Our curriculum incorporates explicit, direct, instructional approaches to teach each of the components identified by the National Reading Panel Report. The sequence of instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and writing are outlined for each component and insures that students reach reading levels that meet or exceed grade level standards. Comprehensive instructional materials include a core reading program (Harcourt *Trophies*) and intervention and supplemental materials to provide additional support and more frequent practice for students who are struggling to learn the five essential components of reading. Explicit instruction within a sequential delineated set of phonics and phonemic awareness activities are taught with feedback, opportunity for application, and practice in reading connected text. Teachers use research-based

practices to teach students the strategies they need to be successful readers. Students engage in the writing process as they receive instruction for writing across the curriculum for various purposes and audiences.

### **Mathematics**

The core curriculum in math at Fairview Elementary maintains a balance between the development of math concepts and basic skills. Students apply basic math skills while working on meaningful and challenging tasks. In addition to traditional math concepts, other topics such as estimation, geometry, measurement, patterns and relationships, algebra concepts, and statistics and probability are investigated. The program (*Trailblazers*) includes activities, labs, daily practice and problems, games, adventure books, and assessments. The curriculum is student-based and engaging and the big ideas for learning incorporate pacing that is critical to build mathematical thinking that leads to more advanced conceptualization. Student growth in the area of mathematics is evidence that the program of studies and the teachers' use of effective instructional strategies and methodologies are aligned to meet the need of all students.

### **Science**

Science curriculum is aligned with state and national standards. Teachers utilize research-based materials and strategies to provide all students with experiences in the life, earth, and physical sciences while developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students develop an understanding of important science concepts as they demonstrate process skills such as observing, measuring, predicting, and communicating. The science curriculum engages students in hands-on, inquiry-based, integrated units that serve as a foundation for success in an increasingly complex scientific and technological world. Fairview Elementary School, as well as all schools in the Capital School District, participate in the State Science Coalition training and utilize Coalition materials as a part of their instructional program.

### **Social Studies**

The Social Studies curriculum incorporates civics, geography, history, and economics. Students use tools such as maps, globes, timelines, charts, and other geo-graphics to learn about various times and places in our world. Studying both primary and secondary resources such as artifacts, diaries, photographs, and newspaper accounts enables students to research topics and understand a variety of cultures and also helps them analyze the causes and effects of events from past to the present. The social studies curriculum is integrated across content areas and provides students opportunities to apply what they learn to their real world experiences.

### **Reading Curriculum**

- 2a. Improving literacy development in today's widely diverse classrooms will produce proficient and motivated readers. The vision that every child can be a successful literacy learner is the catalyst for developing and selecting a particular approach to reading. Initial instruction in reading is the first line of prevention against reading failure (Snow, Burns, & Griffen, 1999). Research recommends explicit, direct instructional approaches to teach phonemic awareness and phonics, to build reading fluency, teach vocabulary, and to stimulate growth of active comprehension strategies in young children. Fairview Elementary, as a part of a district reading initiative, conducted a careful review of reading research, as well as programs and materials that met the criteria of scientifically based reading research. Programs and components were evaluated using the Consumer Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program by Simmons and Kame'enu'e. This critical elements analysis identified the most effective programs based on research and helped the school to determine the approach that was most effective based on identified student needs. In addition, a curriculum mapping process was used to establish goals and benchmarks by marking period and to coordinate the instructional priorities with selected materials.

While the curriculum itself and the program and materials are important, effective instruction in reading involves much more. The implementation of effective reading instruction has both global and local characteristics. At the global level, both the school and the individual teacher are responsible for putting into place a number of practices that will insure that students learn to read and enjoy reading. Global characteristics of effective instruction include: 1) the appropriate allocation and use of time to teach reading 2) the use of small groups in the regular classroom 3) a clearly articulated curriculum that is aligned with materials and assessments 4) direct instruction in reading skills and strategies 5) staff development and teacher support 6) an intervention program for struggling readers 7) a system of assessment that informs and guides the rest of the components. Effective reading instruction exhibits a consistent set of characteristics that are research based and guided by ongoing assessment of student progress. Classroom teachers must make effective use of allocated instructional time and apportion it in the most effective manner. They need to teach reading directly and explicitly. They need to provide coaching and scaffolding necessary to support students as they acquire and apply new skills, and they need to create a classroom environment that is stable, organized, and motivating so that students master critical skills and the joy of reading.

### **Writing's Impact on Essential Skills and Knowledge**

3. Writing is one area of the curriculum that clearly impacts the level of understanding of essential skills and knowledge. Writing is the second important component of literate behavior, and in many ways attention to writing helps to foster reading skills. Not only must students read well, they must write well, too. Modeling various types of writing and integrating writing across the curriculum improves levels of understanding and the application of content. Writing for different purposes and audiences is a "life skill". As with reading, writing instruction in the content areas must emphasize instructional practices and strategies that build connections between students' past knowledge and new information.

Over a period of two years, the staff at Fairview worked with consultants from the Kid Writing and 6 + 1 Traits programs to implement best practices in writing. Participation and information from the Delaware Writing Project have also contributed to the growing awareness of a more fully integrated view of the reading and writing process. Implementation of Writing Workshop—a process engaging children in productive behaviors and events that lead to ever-increasing writing fluency and sophistication—rather than on product, gives students choices and responsibility for their work. In implementing these principles, teachers also consider the workshop structure, time to conference, share, and ways to evaluate progress. As a part of this time, mini-lessons are also conducted that demonstrate and model a specific skill or strategy. Teachers model the thinking process and guide students in thinking about experiences, selecting a topic, and move children into writing proficiency. During Writing Workshop, teachers also connect expressive, informative, and persuasive writing to develop and extend student thinking about subject area topics. Content area journals, learning logs, and literature responses are used across all content areas to improve understanding of content as well as help children think at higher levels. Even in math, students must communicate mathematically by writing how they solved a problem. The 2004-2005 school year scores showed a dramatic improvement in writing achievement over the previous year's scores. Student scores on the state writing assessment exceeded district and state scores. Eighty-eight percent of all students met the standard (a gain of 35% over the previous year). Ninety percent of the African American students met the standard (a gain of 50% over the previous year). White students realized a 17% gain over the previous year with 83% meeting the standard. The improvement in achievement has demonstrated the importance writing plays in all content areas.

### **Instructional Strategies and Methodologies**

4. Fairview Elementary utilizes a variety of strategies and instructional methods to improve student learning. The strategies selected are those methods that are based on research to directly impact student learning. Direct, explicit instruction is one example of an instructional method that is used across content areas. Direct instruction means that teachers explain the purpose of the strategy or skill, tell when and how to apply it, and then carefully model its use. Modeling demands “thinking aloud” while teaching and providing several examples of how the skill is to be used. After the initial or introductory phase of instruction, teachers carefully release responsibility to the students and guide them in the application of the skill. Students must be given ample time to practice the skill, and the amount of practice must be adjusted to the efficiency of the learners. We also call this massed and distributed practice and ensure that students periodically review the skill over time. Students must also be given the opportunity to apply the skills on their own.

Small group instruction is another effective method that improves student learning. Based on research, the most effective teachers in high poverty schools allocated 50 minutes of class time to small group instruction, compared to 25 minutes for the less effective classrooms. (Taylor, 2001) Small group instruction allows the teacher a number of advantages and enables teachers to provide the necessary support and scaffolding for students to apply what they learn. Finally, Fairview Elementary teaches comprehension strategies to improve content knowledge and understanding of text across all curricular areas. Comprehension is defined as “intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between the text and the reader” (Harris and Hodges, 1995) Active, purposeful readers use strategies to enhance their understanding of text and to repair misunderstanding when comprehension breaks down. Teaching the strategies identified in the National Reading Panel Report (2000) increases reading comprehension in students. These strategies are taught individually and then combined into reciprocal dialogues so that students learn to use them flexibly and independently. In addition, instruction in specific comprehension strategies has also been shown to be an effective way to increase reading achievement in children who have reading disabilities (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1997).

### **The Impact of Professional Development on Student Achievement**

5. Professional development both launches and guides the implementation of all curriculum and programs. The design for professional development follows the work of Joyce (1990) and the National Staff Development Council Standards. This research states that in order for new instructional ideas to take root in a school and teacher’s repertoire, it is necessary to not only train the teachers in the new instructional ideas and programs but to also improve their ability to think about student growth and learning. In addition, the professional development activities must be ongoing and integrated into classroom practice. All professional development at Fairview Elementary is based on student achievement data. In addition, it is supported and written into the school plan. Professional development can take many forms. For some, a demonstration lesson in the classroom is most effective so teachers can observe a new instructional approach. Sometimes a more formal presentation and discussion are more appropriate. After formal presentations, modeling, and practice in a secure setting, Joyce, (1990) finds that peer coaching is essential for new ideas to take root. Ultimately, the process of staff development becomes a system of self-reflection and collaboration as a school grapples with the task of teaching and meeting the needs of all students. The staff at Fairview participated in five professional Book Study groups during the 2004-2005 school year. The book study groups give teachers the opportunity to gain knowledge about a specific strategy, implement the strategy in the classroom, and then come back together to share and reflect on what worked. Professional books are always based on research and are aligned to essential skills and knowledge and the curriculum. Coaching is a professional development model that has been shown to improve instruction. In this model, professional development begins with reading-specific training that focuses

on research and instructional practice. Coaching extends this training by providing on-site support and guidance. The Literacy Coach at Fairview works collaboratively with teachers to set professional goals for developing, extending, and improving effective research-based instructional skills, strategies and practices. Coaches are not evaluators or administrators. Coaches are members of the staff who take an active role in improving classroom reading instruction by:

*Sharing their expertise through training and in-class support;  
Demonstrating lessons and helping teachers refine instruction;*

*Observing teachers' practices and providing feedback, support, and ongoing assistance with SBRR strategies, programs, and assessments;*

*Helping teachers and administrators use assessment data to inform instruction and professional development.*

Coaching is one part of a high-quality professional development plan. Research shows that 95% of teachers who receive ongoing support and guidance through coaching are more likely to learn and implement new practices in the classroom. Researchers also estimate that teachers generally need to use a new instructional strategy approximately twenty-five times before it is transferred into their daily teaching routine.

**Delaware Student Testing Program**  
**Performance Levels and Cut Scores**

This overview applies to:      Tables 1 and 2    Cut Scores  
    Table 3            Reading Grade 3  
    Table 4            Math Grade 3

Grade: 3      Test: Delaware Student Testing Program  
 Edition/publication year: 1996    Publisher: Harcourt Educational Measurement Systems

*Delaware's Student Testing Program has been in place since 1998 as a measure of how well students are performing against the standards established by Delaware teachers, parents, and community members. Student results help teachers to identify strengths and instructional needs. Assessment results also help teachers improve instruction. Student results on the criterion referenced test are reported as performance levels.*

<b>DSTP Student Performance Levels</b>		
<b>Level</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
5	Distinguished	Excellent Performance
4	Exceeds the Standard	Very Good Performance
3	Meets the Standard	Good Performance
2	Below the Standard	Needs Improvement
1	Well Below the Standard	Needs Significant Improvement

Fairview Elementary School's scores compared to the State of Delaware. The levels in which the students performed can then be measured by using the Cut Scores tables.

Table 1

<b>Cut Scores- DSTP Reading Grade 3</b> (lowest scaled score a student can earn and still be within the indicated performance level)				
<b>Well Below the Standard</b>	<b>Below the Standard</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Distinguished</b>
<386	387	411	465	482

<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>
<b>Fairview Elementary</b>	448.8	452.6	433.10	434.54	433.27
<b>State</b>	445.7	446.5	442.49	440.74	436.21

Table 2

<b>Cut Scores- DSTP Math Grade 3</b> (lowest scaled score a student can earn and still be within the indicated performance level)				
<b>Well Below the Standard</b>	<b>Below</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Distinguished</b>
<381	382	407	464	499

<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>
<b>Fairview Elementary</b>	438.7	436.8	432.33	425.96	427.40
<b>State</b>	441.2	439.3	434.79	434.08	431.93

**Fairview Elementary School - Table 3**  
**Delaware Student Testing Program**

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Reading

Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt Educational Measurement Systems



Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_ Scaled scores \_\_\_\_ Percentiles  X

Testing year	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>Fairview Elementary Grade 3-Total Group</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	95%	92%	69%	73%	74%
% Well Below State Standards	0%	0%	11%	7%	9%
% Below State Standards	5%	8%	21%	20%	17%
% Meets State Standards	71%	56%	50%	49%	53%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	11%	16%	12%	12%	16%
% At Distinguished level	13%	20%	8%	11%	6%
Number of students tested	38	50	67	81	70
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	97.3%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. African American</b> (specify subgroup)					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	100%	86%	57%	71%	63%
% Well Below State Standards	0%	0%	11%	8%	10%
% Below State Standards	0%	14%	31%	22%	26%
% Meets State Standards	88%	75%	40%	60%	53%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	12%	7%	11%	8%	10%
% At Distinguished level	0%	4%	8%	3%	0%
Number of students tested	17	28	35	37	40
<b>2. White</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	87%	100%	78%	77%	90%
% Well Below State Standards	0%	0%	11%	8%	7%
% Below State Standards	13%	0%	11%	14%	4%
% Meets State Standards	67%	35%	59%	39%	55%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	13%	25%	11%	19%	21%
% At Distinguished level	7%	40%	7%	19%	14%
Number of students tested	15	20	27	36	29
<b>3. Low Income</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	100%	87%	53%	74%	65%
% Well Below State Standards	0%	0%	9%	6%	12%
% Below State Standards	0%	13%	38%	21%	24%
% Meets State Standards	79%	74%	44%	56%	50%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	11%	4%	6%	15%	12%
% At Distinguished level	11%	9%	3%	3%	3%

Number of students tested	19	23	32	34	34
<b>4. Not Low Income</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	90%	96%	83%	73%	83%
% Well Below State Standards	0%	0%	11%	9%	7%
% Below State Standards	11%	4%	6%	19%	11%
% Meets State Standards	63%	41%	54%	45%	57%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	11%	26%	17%	11%	19%
% At Distinguished level	16%	30%	11%	17%	8%
Number of students tested	19	27	35	47	36
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	85%	82%	79%	79%	75%
% Well Below State Standards	6%	6%	8%	9%	11%
% Below State Standards	10%	11%	13%	12%	14%
% Meets State Standards	53%	50%	50%	51%	51%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	16%	15%	15%	15%	13%
% At Distinguished level	15%	17%	14%	14%	11%
Number of students tested	7,654	7,872	8,229	8,074	8,177

**Fairview Elementary School - Table 4**  
**Delaware Student Testing Program**

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Delaware State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt Education Measurement Systems

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_ Scaled scores \_\_\_\_ Percentiles X

Testing year	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>Fairview Elementary Grade 3-Total Group</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	86%	77%	72%	68%	76%
% Well Below State Standards	5%	8%	13%	10%	17%
% Below State Standards	10%	15 %	15%	22%	7%
% Meets State Standards	62%	49%	48%	48%	61%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	19%	23%	18%	19%	13%
% At Distinguished level	5%	6%	6%	1%	1%
Number of students tested	42	53	67	81	70
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	97.3%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. African American</b> (specify subgroup)					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	79%	68%	60%	61%	71%
% Well Below State Standards	5%	7%	20%	13%	20%
% Below State Standards	16%	3%	20%	26%	10%
% Meets State Standards	63%	54%	43%	55%	68%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	16%	14%	11%	5%	3%
% At Distinguished level	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%
Number of students tested	19	28	35	38	40
<b>2. White</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	88%	87%	82%	75%	90%
% Well Below State Standards	6%	9%	7%	6%	14%
% Below State Standards	6%	4%	11%	19%	4%
% Meets State Standards	59%	44%	52%	42%	52%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	18%	30%	26%	30%	28%
% At Distinguished level	12%	13%	4%	3%	4%
Number of students tested	17	23	27	36	29

<b>3. Low Income</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	86%	72%	59%	67%	71%
% Well Below State Standards	0%	12%	19%	12%	18%
% Below State Standards	14%	16%	22%	21%	12%
% Meets State Standards	64%	64%	44%	58%	62%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	18%	8%	13%	9%	9%
% At Distinguished level	5%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Number of students tested	22	25	32	33	34
<b>4. Not Low Income</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	85%	82%	83%	68%	81%
% Well Below State Standards	10%	4%	9%	8%	17%
% Below State Standards	5%	14%	9%	23%	3%
% Meets State Standards	60%	36%	51%	42%	61%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	20%	36%	23%	25%	17%
% At Distinguished level	5%	11%	9%	2%	3%
Number of students tested	20	28	35	47	36
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	79%	78%	74%	72%	73%
% Well Below State Standards	9%	9%	10%	11%	12%
% Below State Standards	12%	13%	16%	17%	15%
% Meets State Standards	50%	49%	49%	46%	50%
% At Exceeds State Standards*	20%	21%	18%	19%	16%
% At Distinguished level	9%	8%	7%	7%	6%
Number of students tested	8,534	8,685	8,818	8,144	8,303

